

OASLC Technical Committee
Notes from Meeting
1-3 p.m., October 27, 2014

Members present: Carissa Turner (KATM), Erin Kunisch (OASLC), Linda Chisholm (KATM), Michael Shephard (SWAN), John Morris (AKRO), Chris Gabriel (GLBA), Jim Pfeifferberger (OASLC), Benjamin Pister (OASLC), Peter Neitlich (WEAR), Mike Holt (WEAR), Rachel Mason (AKRO)

Introductions and Changes in Personnel:

- Benjamin introduced Erin Kunisch, the new Science Communications Specialist.
- Philip Hooze, now Superintendent at GLBA, has replaced Susan Boudreau on the OASLC board.
- Frank Hays will serve as the board chair through FY15.

Accomplishments in FY14:

- FY14 start with a 10% cut due to sequestration, along with a rigid work plan. By January, the reduction was only 1%. The situation was awkward and challenging. In the end, the total budget was \$638,550, and everything was spent but \$18.
- Erin Kunisch was hired.
- The new website went live in May, and there is not a lot on it yet. Erin will be working on a content plan, which will be sent to the Technical Committee for further refinement.
- The program got involved neck deep in Coastal Settlement grants. We accomplished what we had to do.
- CESU agreements were a big problem in FY13. In FY14 we succeeded in executing 10 cooperative agreements through the CESU.
- We had hoped to draft a strategic plan but did not. Facilitator Jan Caulfield from Juneau has been contracted to see us through the process this year. This will be accomplished through a series of videoconferences in January and February.
- Jim described the Rangers in Residence program. Seasonal interpretive staff at KLGO make presentations at the ASLC. We pay for 1.5 FTE during the summer months to deliver these programs. The money goes to KEFJ and they rotate staff through. This year there were programs about glacier studies and climate change, and one about archeological work in the park. Next year, there will be programs about black oystercatchers and marine debris. Jim estimates that perhaps 50% of all visitors go to both the ASLC and on a boat tour.
- SCA media intern: For three years OASLC has been able to get an SCA intern who is a student or recent graduate of Central Michigan University. Focusing on media, the interns develop videos of research projects. Last year an intern was placed at SITK; next year one will be placed at KLGO. LACL has asked for an intern to help with a bear and clam project. WEAR has asked for an intern for FY16. The internship costs about \$8,000 and is a huge value for the cost. The parks utilizing interns need to provide them with housing and have someone local to supervise them. The same program has been sending interns to DENA and to Canyonlands. Michael Shephard asked if the parks had to put together annual reports after having a media intern. There is no required annual report, but we could put together a brief document describing expectations, and what's been

done in the past. None of the interns have worked on web pages so far. They have focused on more special media programs. They normally stay for 12 weeks.

- LACL has an Interp position in Homer, occupied by Rebekah Jones. LACL asked OASLC to fund a little bit of Rebekah's time, and ended up paying four pay periods for Discovery Lab. Now LACL is asking us to cover 50% of the position for FY15.

Agreements with ASLC:

- The biggest agreement is the 5-year Seabird Research project, which started about four years ago. Through videotaping murre and kittiwake colonies, the project analyzed their productivity. It is complementary to SWAN's seabird surveys. The Technical Committee needs to look at the project carefully. Do we want to spend more money on it? If not, what is our exit strategy? Michael Shephard asked whether any manuscripts are in preparation. No, the researchers want to collect all data first.
- The Predatory Fish as Samplers of Forage Base project takes advantage of the many charter boats by obtaining stomachs from salmon, lingcod, and halibut the boats are cleaning. It is an interesting project, and an opportunity for citizen science. The Technical Committee needs to give an informed recommendation.
- Bioindicators Using Razor Clams runs quick tests on bivalves to see what is affecting them. The researchers have to figure out how to transport samples from places as far away as Aniakchak so the tests are valid. It is included in the Changing Tides grant.
- The Harbor Seal Research project has dragged on too long. We still need to get the data about long-term changes in Aialik Bay. There will be no more money.
- Mentoring Ocean Connections, an education grant, was a good project but we won't fund it again. The project teaches how to effectively use distance education gear. KEFJ is coming online with a distance education program to get teachers up to speed. The workshop is next week. Considering the high turnover of teachers in rural areas, it would be good if they could walk away from the workshop with tools to use, or that they could share with other teachers.
- Village Outreach is an education grant. The ASLC takes marine science education to villages off the road system. We try to send park staff too, although the last time an OASLC educator went was in 2012. We have tried to be better about coordination with local parks. KEFJ decided to contribute an additional \$20,000 specifically to include Port Graham, Nanwalek, and Seldovia.
- The Teacher Workshop is an annual program. We could go to the National Association of Interpretation to support our workshop. A lot of the funding goes toward feeding and lodging the educators. This year the theme is "Seven Principles of Ocean Literacy." We rotate targeting elementary and high school teachers over the years. Themes have included seabirds, marine mammals, and oil spill. We have a lot of repeat customers who benefit from a variety of themes.
- Intern and Staff Development: the title doesn't describe what this is. Three of ASLC's summer interns end up spending half their time at ASLC and half on tour boats. KEFJ staff serve as mentors. The interns talk about their work at ASLC when they are on the boat, and about what they do on the boat when they are at ASLC. We have heard many positive things about this program from ASLC.

- An Ocean Acidification Teacher Workshop was proposed as a Coastal Marine grant but was not funded. OASLC had some year-end money available to fund the workshop, which will be held at SITK. It will be a big item in our work plan this year, and is scheduled to happen in March or April. The OASLC board already approved this workshop; they didn't like the larger project proposed for Coastal Marine funds. The Board's two main objections were the high turnover of rural teachers (a non-issue in Southeast Alaska) and that there didn't seem to be park support (they had overlooked letters of support). Now, we're pleased to have a manageable project.
- Kachemak Bay Research Reserve/Discovery Labs is a lab on estuaries. Last year was the third year we have funded the project. It's part of Changing Tides, assuming they iron out their problems with state funding.

Sponsorships:

- The Alaska Marine Science Symposium. For our sponsorship we get some exhibit space and an opportunity for flag-waving. We'll put in some scientific reports from NPS.
- The National Ocean Science Bowl/Tsunami Bowl. This sponsorship has great value.

Miscellaneous:

- Jim went to Motorboat Operator Instructor Certification Course (MOICC) training so that he can be an MOCC instructor at KEFJ and other parks as needed. Michael mentioned that this would be great to have for KATM and LACL.
- In September, OASLC had \$14,000 left as end-of-year funds. The facilitator for the strategic plan cost \$6,000 less than expected. The money was distributed on a first come, first served basis, and every park that made a request got some funding.

Plan for FY 15

We're operating under a continuing resolution. About 19% of funds are available to spend between now and December 11. Fixed costs include salaries, continuing ASLC agreements, strategic planning, and the teacher workshop. There will be about \$75,000 left over. Benjamin plans to set up a meeting between the OASLC Board and ASLC.

The Technical Committee needs to help develop an FY 15 work plan. Benjamin asked for volunteers and candidates to review particular agreements.

- Seabird Research project: Melanie Flamme (YUGA), Heather Colleti, Laura Phillips, Tania Lewis (GLBA)
- Predator Forage Fish: Chris Gabriele, Laura Phillips, Heather Colleti, Chris Sergeant, Dan Young
- Village Outreach: Mike Holt, Roy Wood
- KBRR/Discovery Labs: Megan Richotte, John Morris

Erin is working on developing a content strategy for OASLC's website. John Morris invited Erin to participate on the region's social media team.

OASLC is a big part of Changing Tides and Marine Debris, a Coastal Marine Grants project funded for this year.